(xix) 50,000 MW hydropower initiatives for exploitation of hydroelectric potential.

(xx) 100,000 MW thermal power initiatives.

(xxi) Mega Power Policy for encouraging quick capacity addition of bigger generation plants.

(xxii) Accelerated Generation and Supply Programme (AG&SP) to support capacity augmentation through renovation and modernization and new generation schemes.

Causes of shut-down of Nathpa Jhakri Hydel Project

3091. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have analyzed the cause of the recent shut-down of Nathpa Jhakri Hydel Project on river Sutlej in Himachal Pradesh and also the bridge collapse at the Teesta Low Dam Hydel Project due to inherent environmental hazards;

(b) what is the rationale of building dams over unpredictable glacier-fed Himalayan rivers flowing through highly seismic and unstable rock formations; and

(c) whether India has any standing pact with China for constant monitoring of water levels of rivers in Tibet due to glacial-bursts?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) The causes for recent shut-down of Nathpa Jhakri Hydro-electric Project (1500 MW) on river Sutlej in Himachal Pradesh are heavy rains and flash floods in Sutlej river due to breach in Parechu Lake in Tibet. This also caused abrupt rise in silt content in the river water much more than the permissible limit of 5000 PPM because of which the machines had to be closed down as a precautionary measure to protect them from getting damaged. The bridge which collapsed at Teesta Low Dam Project Stage-III was a temporary bridge and was being dismantled.

(b) Hydro power projects are built after conducting detailed Hydrological and Geological Investigations. The Project location is firmed up only after analyzing the conditions at site. Site specific earthquake parameters are also considered in the design of structures.

(c) India does not have any standing pact with China for constant monitoring of water levels of rivers in Tibet particularly due to glacial bursts.

Power transmission project in Afghanistan by PGC

3092. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Power Grid Corporation proposes to set up a power transmission projects in Afghanistan;

(b) if so, the details of the project indicating the total outlay involved therein; and

(c) how far would this help to light up the Capital City Kabul and other areas of Afghanistan?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED) (a) and (b) Ministry of External Affairs has signed an agreement with Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. on 12.08.2005 for construction of a 220 KV Double Circuit Transmission Line (202 Kms.) from Pul-e-Khumri and a Sub-station at Kabul. The project is scheduled to be completed in 42 months at an estimated cost of the Rs. 478.72 crore.

(c) This would be a major infrastructure project in Afghanistan and would facilitate the commission of 250 MW of power to Kabul.

Private investment in Power Sector

3093. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering to encourage private investment in power sector by announcing further relaxation to the mega and tiny power projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether Government of Maharashtra had made some suggestions for power projects in Maharashtra; and

(c) if so, Government's response and reaction thereto?